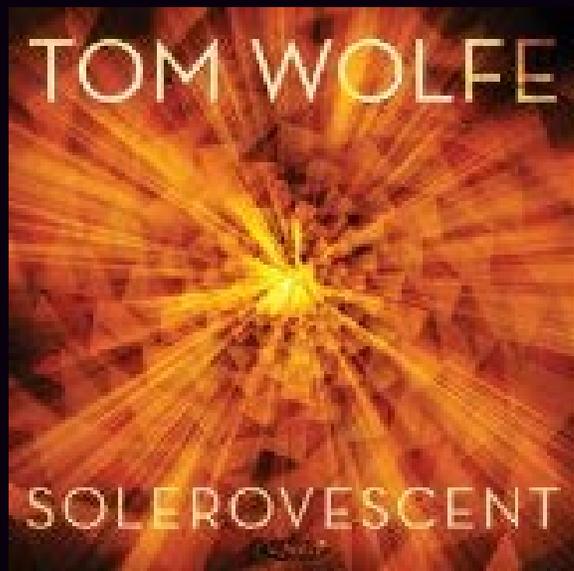


Issue 149 reviews

Our latest and greatest reviews for your reading & listening pleasure

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Tom Wolfe – SOLEROVESCENT: If you're looking for some absolutely satisfying jazz guitar, you've reached your destination with Tom's splendid playing... tunes like the high-energy opener, "[Midnight Sushi](#)", will have you tappin' & (maybe, even) dancin'! Folks, I'm just lovin' this stuff; it doesn't get any better than this when it comes to music full of life & energy! Tom's guitar/guitar synthesizer are joined by Ken Watters on trumpet/flugel horn, Tim Goodwin & Chris Kozak doing bass and Danny Gottlieb's drums in a musical adventure that will attract your ears immediately, and hold them for a good long time. Tracks like "[Sidetrack](#)" just won't let go of your soul, & will stay on your playlists for years to come. It was the 7:28 "[La Luna Llena](#)" that got my vote as favorite of the ten tracks offered up for your jazz pleasure, though... all the players are right ON the mark on this piece, and I totally dug it... mighty mellow guitar here! If you don't get another jazz guitar CD this year – get this one... I give it my MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.99. Get more information at [Tom's web page for this release](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

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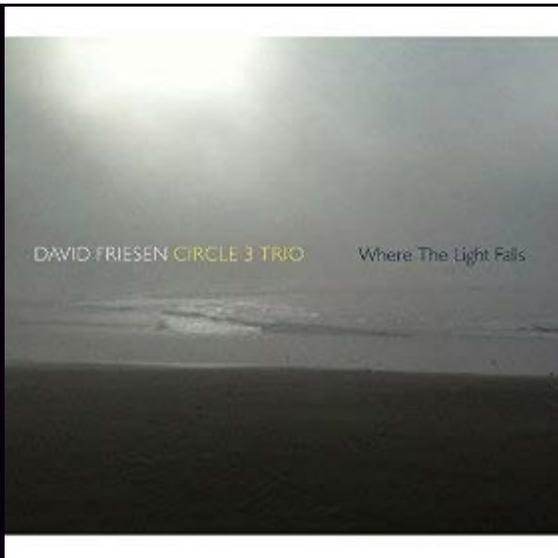
TOM WOLFE
SOLEROVESCENT

...

\$14.19

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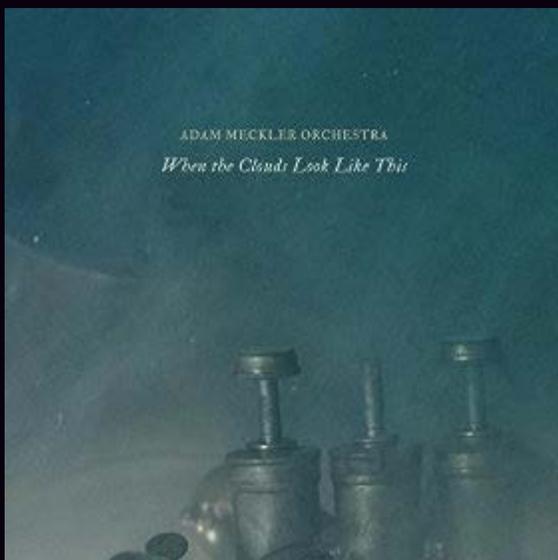
David Friesen Circle 3 Trio – WHERE THE LIGHT FALLS: *This one didn't*



actually get "jumped" to the head of the line... it's here because this came from a brand new promoter/label (well, new to us, anyway)... the other reason is because I fell in love with David's amazing bass playing many years ago. On this totally fresh (double-CD) excursion, he's joined by pianist Greg Goebel, Charlie Doggett on drums and Larry Koonse doing electric guitar on several of the tracks. As you listen to the heavy-duty playing on "[Left Field Blues](#)", you'll know why David is one of my favorite jazz players of all time... as I said, innovative, creative and fresh! The drum intro on "[Zebra](#)" segues sweetly into perfectly timed bass from David... an amazing tune that will have you boppin' right along with the players! It was the 8:36 "[Counterpart](#)" that got my vote as favorite of the nineteen excellent pieces offered for your sonic enjoyment... it all comes together on this one! I give David & his totally talented crew a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of (a perfect) 5.00... which means that they also get the "PICK" of this issue for "best bass-led jazz CD". Get more

information at [the Origin Records label page](#) for this release! *Rotcod Zzaj*

An Amazon product listing for the album 'Where The Light Falls' by David Friesen Circle 3 Trio. It shows the album cover, a price of \$23.09 with a Prime logo, and a 'Shop now' button.



Adam Meckler Orchestra – WHEN CLOUDS LOOK LIKE THIS: Adam conducts, arranges and plays solo trumpet on this little gem from August 2014. As you listen to the opener, "[Busta Jones](#)", you'll hear right away that you've hit the jazz jackpot. An absolutely wonderful and fresh approach to jazz in orchestral mode. The trumpet lead-in to "[Sparkly Eyes](#)" will quench your thirst for brassy jazz that stays with you for the long haul... this tune won't come off your playlists anytime soon... everything is recorded flawlessly, and the energy levels are stellar through every tune! Though there are only six tracks, none of them are less than 8 minutes, so you get to explore right along with the artists as the tunes mature. My personal favorite was the swingin' "[Beautiful Beatrice](#)"... if you can't get your toes tappin' to this – you're not the true jazz lover you claim to be. I give Adam & his orchestra a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.99. Get more information at [the Adam Meckler website](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

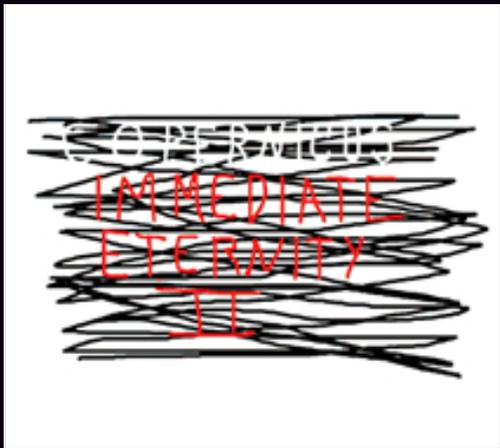
The Amazon logo, consisting of the word 'amazon' in its signature font with the orange arrow underneath.



When the Clouds Look...

\$5.94

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Copernicus – IMMEDIATE ETERNITY II: I've been reviewing this cat since my 'zine was started up in 1990 (actually, in 1988)... this outing is closer to jazz, i.e., "laid-back", as is clear on the opener, "[Beautiful Humanity](#)"... I truly can't remember when I've heard him do lyrical adventure so "jazzy" – with strong elements of high-end rock (of course). On "[Free Of Me](#)", you'll hear something that's definitely akin to a "lizard lounge" think – until the background/lead guitar kicks in. "Regular" listeners will probably move on down the racks to escape the poignant messages that Joseph Smalkowski (aka Copernicus) drills into your mind. I'm not quite sure how the band was able to extract such volcanic energy from a title like "[Dust](#)", but as you scope this one out, you'll know that you're witness to severe changes in the atmospheric density that makes up your mind – in a very, VERY jazzy fashion – this one is, without question, my favorite Copernicus tune for 2014! I give Copernicus & his crew a MOST HIGHLY

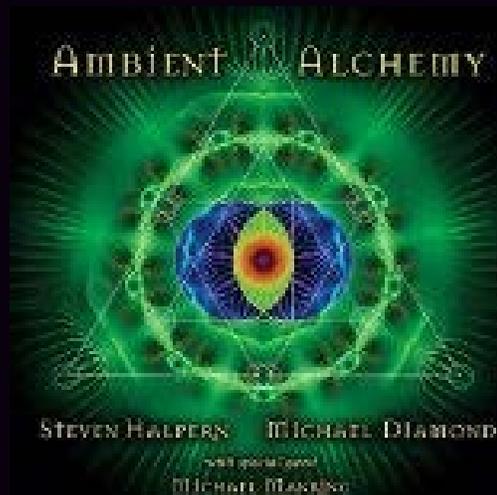
RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.99. Get more information at the [MOONJUNE RECORDS site for this release.](#) *Rotcod Zzaj*

Immediate Eternity II

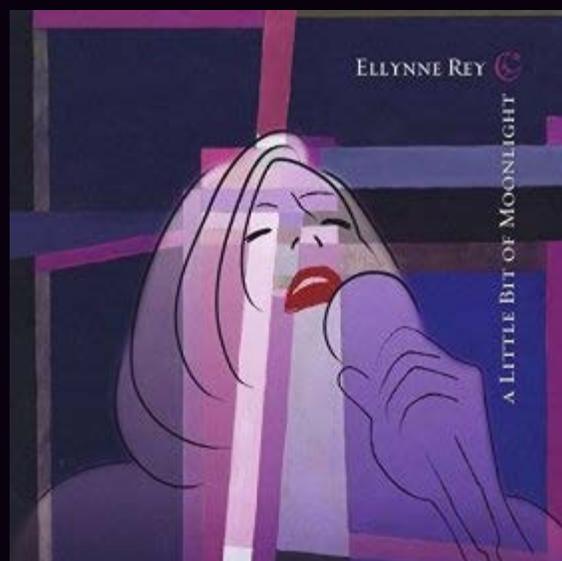
\$14.39

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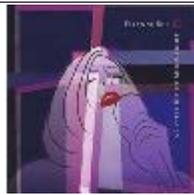


Steven Halpern & Michael Diamond – AMBIENT ALCHEMY: As the CD title implies, this is not just “pretty” music, it possesses those magical qualities that allow you to escape the la-di-da and ho-hum of the everyday... I’ve been reviewing Steven’s work for a long time now, and can honestly say that this pairing his keyboards up with Michael’s guitar work is the best I’ve ever heard from him. As you listen to the marvelous percussion and sweeping sounds on [“Return to Shamballa”](#), you’ll realize you’re in the presence of musical magicians who can create new and mysterious worlds for your ears. The synths on [“Above The Clouds”](#) will transport you to the absolute beyond... and all the way back. It was the recording perfection on [“Rain Dream”](#) that won my vote for personal favorite of the fourteen splendid compositions offered up for your listening pleasure... definitely among the best ambient works I’ve heard (yet) in 2014. I give Steven, Michael & crew a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an “EQ” (energy quotient) rating of 4.99. Get more information at [Steven’s website](#).
Rotcod Zzaj



Ellyne Rey – A LITTLE BIT OF MOONLIGHT: If you aren’t happy after listening to Ellyne’s too-cool vocals on the opener, [“Make Someone Happy”](#)... you never will be! She has stellar players behind her (Paul beaudry on bass, Gene Bertoncini on guitar, Tony Jefferson doing drums, Bennett Paster on piano and Daniel Sadownick doing percussion), and the recording is superb. Tunes like the laid-back [“Dindi”](#) will capture your heart and have you humming right along. My personal favorite of the fifteen songs offered up for your listening pleasure is Mal Waldron’s [“Soul Eyes”](#)... the timing was perfect, and you can hear Ellyne’s sultry skill shining through on every note (of course, with that many tracks, you may find a different track that’s your favorite – totally up to you). I give Ellyne and her high-energy players a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, especially for listeners who demand perfection... “EQ” (energy quotient) rating is 4.98. Get more information at [Ellyne’s website](#).
Rotcod Zzaj





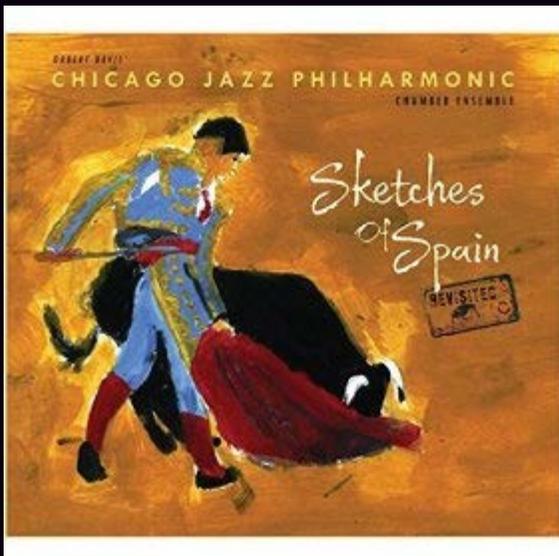
Little Bit of Moonlight

\$21.80 

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Orbert Davis – SKETCHES OF SPAIN REVISITED: Obviously, Orbert plays trumpet... his June 2014 release is together with the Chicago Philharmonic, so you get the full Matilda, no doubt about it! In the spirit of Miles (no relation), Orbert approaches this (totally) with his own spirit, and gives you his own take on the original compositions (with two new ones as well). The 17:57 "[Concierto de Aranjuez](#)" provides plenty of room/space for Orbert to wrap you up in his magic horn, and I can guarantee that "true" jazz lovers will have this tune on their playlists for a long time to come (it's been stuck on mine ever since I received it)! You will hear more than shades of creativity on this CD... pieces like the wonderful "[Solea](#)" (my favorite of the five offered up, by the way) are played expertly and with some superb changes – this tune is among the very best trumpet-led I've heard (yet) in 2014. I give the CD a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.97. Get more information at [Orbert's web page for this release](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

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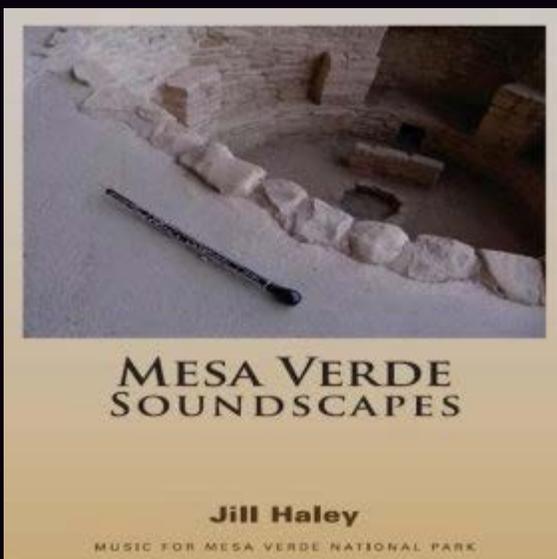
Sketches of Spain...

\$7.99

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Jill Haley – MESA VERDE SOUNDSCAPES: I first listened to and reviewed Jill's beautiful piano and oboe work in [issue # 129](#)... she got high marks on that one, and this new CD takes her work up to yet another level... some truly beautiful music on this 14-song CD. The gentle calm she projects on "[Curves Of Burnt Orange](#)" will soothe even the most savage of us. What Jill knows how to do (that some other players don't) is take advantage of the "silent spaces" and let the listener fill them in with their imagination... her husband David's guitar on "[Towers and Kivas](#)" is totally fulfilling, and will be listened to over and over again – it certainly was by me. My personal favorite on the album was the slow-paced '[Vibrant Mesa Blossoms](#)'... it digs right down into your soul and fills your spirit with the same vibrancy those blossoms must have conveyed. I give Jill and her musical pals a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.98. You can get more information about this totally talented player at [Jill's website](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

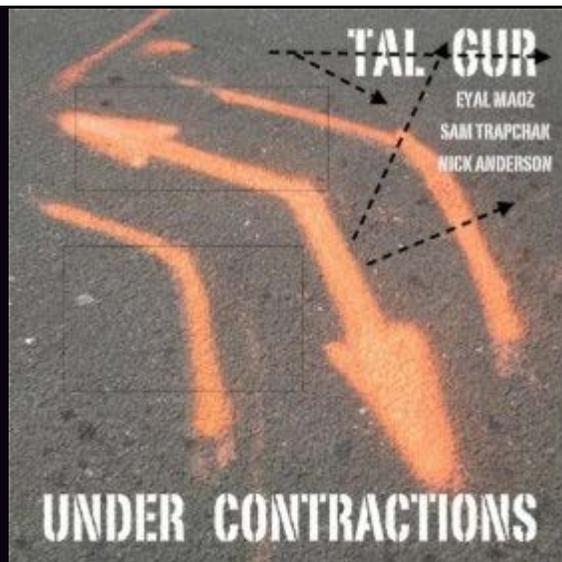
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Mesa Verde Soundscapes
\$8.99

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Tal Gur – UNDER CONTRACTIONS: This is some very interesting, and very different, jazz... it won't "hit" in all listeners' ears as the perfect session... OTOH, for my jaded old ears, this superb quartet is IT! Tal's straight alto & soprano sax work lead the group, and especially on tunes like the 6:12 "[Missiles Up, Missiles Down](#)", you get a really strong sense of their jazz diversity. This is no "tired" or "old" jazz... it's the stuff that the 21st century will be made of, musically anyway (the bass solo at around 2:00 is just excellent). There are "angles" in many of the compositions, as you might expect when many of the tunes are about the war in Tal's "zone" (Israel, of course)... my personal favorite was the ultra-high-energy "[Time For Fight](#)"...



if you can't get a sense of the improvisational ecstasy in this group's playing from this great tune, you've been wearing them brown shoes too long, pal. I'm highly impressed... Tal's CD gets a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from me, particularly for listeners who aren't afraid to explore the depths of improvised music; "EQ" (energy quotient) rating if 4.97. Get more information at [the Tal Gur website](#). *Rotcod Zzaj*

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Under Contractions

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